What's Right for Me?

A Guide for Seniors and their Families about Home, Community, and Residential Care Options in Ontario

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Welcome

If you are a senior considering your care options, this guide is meant for you. It is also designed to help families and caregivers who are supporting someone to plan their care.

Whether you are already well into the planning process, or you are just beginning to explore what's right for you, this guide can help.

How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to be a resource for you. You can read it from beginning to end, or just read the parts that are helpful to you.

You may find that you come back to the guide several times because your needs and circumstances may change. Since changes can happen gradually or overnight, the key is to be informed and aware of your options in advance.

Finding the right mix of home and community services, or choosing a place that offers the care you are looking for, can take time.

This guide can help you to become familiar with the options and consider what is right for you or a loved one.

Getting Started

You may be in the process of deciding whether to stay in your own home or move to a place that provides services. If so, you may be wondering:

*Can I get the help I need **and** stay in my own home?*

What types of services can help me to stay healthy and independent?

Can I afford to stay at home and receive the care I need?

Or, you may be considering moving to a place that offers care. In this case, you may be wondering:

How do I find a place that's right for me?

What options do I have? What options can I afford?

Are there differences in costs at the various places?

How do I find out about the quality of care provided?

In addition to the resources contained within this guide, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS) has produced a comprehensive directory of resources for seniors on other topics, such as Housing, Finances, Emergency Services, Legal Matters, and Veteran Services and more.
Call toll-free: **1-888-910-1999** and ask for a copy of the **"Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario"** or visit the website: **www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/seniors**

Welcome

As you are exploring these two broad choices, this guide will help you consider the following questions:

Should I stay at home?

▼

Which home care option (or combination of options) is right for me?

▼

How do I arrange for the care that I need?

OR

Should I *move* to a place that provides the services and support that I need?

▼

Which type of setting (with both accommodation and care) is right for me?

▼

How do I arrange for the care that I need?

This guide can assist you to:

- Understand the range of care options and begin to consider "what is right for you." (Chapter 1)
- Explore the *home and community* support service options that help you stay in your own home. (Chapter 2)
- Explore the *residential care* options including the range of service and accommodations available and their associated costs. (Chapter 3)
- Learn about *arranging the care* you are looking for. (Chapter 4)
- Find out more about *selecting a provider* organization. (Chapter 5)

It will also lead you to people who can provide the help and information you need to make informed plans and decisions – both for you, and for your family.

Your Community Care Access Centre Can Help

This guide is designed to complement the services provided by the staff at your local *Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)*. Community Care Access Centres are government-funded agencies that provide information about the various home and community services and the residential settings in your area. This information is provided at no cost to you.

Whether you are just beginning to plan, or ready to finalize arrangements, your local CCAC is a good place to start. To find your local CCAC, call 1-877-234-4343 or visit www.health.gov.on.ca and click on *Seniors' Care*.

Welcome

Some Key Terms to get you started...

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC)
The MOHLTC is the department of the provincial government that is responsible for administering the health care system and providing services to the public through such programs as health insurance (also known as OHIP), drug benefits, assistive devices, care for the mentally ill, long-term care, home and community support services, public health, health promotion and disease prevention. The Ministry also funds and regulates hospitals, medical laboratories, emergency health services and long-term care facilities, as well as operates psychiatric hospitals.

Government-funded (or publicly-funded) services are the services that receive partial or 100% funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. For some services, this funding is administered through a Community Care Access Centre. In other cases, the funding is granted to the provider organization by the MOHLTC.

Community Care Access Centres (CCAC) are the provincially funded organizations providing information to people of all ages about the care options available in designated geographic areas. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care established Community Care Access Centres covering all of Ontario to serve as a local point of contact and service coordination. CCACs also determine eligibility for:

- government-funded home and community services;
- admission to a long-term care facility.

Provider Organizations are the groups that deliver services to the client directly. They may also operate a building where care is provided. These organizations can be one of the following: a non-profit corporation, a private corporation, a municipal government or an aboriginal organization.

To find other key terms used in this guide, please refer to the Index of Key Terms on page 62.

This guide provides information about many care options including those that are government-funded and those that are not.
Look for the text in *italics* to find out more about funding sources, potential consumer fees, and financial subsidies.

Chapter 1: Introduction

- Understanding the Range of Options
- Considering What's Right for You

Chapter 1: Introduction

Understanding the Range of Options

There are several care options for seniors. These options have the common goal of enabling people to live as independently as possible in the community. There are two broad categories of care for seniors:

- **Home and Community Support Services** help people to stay in their own home and get the extra support they need. With home and community support services, seniors can use only the services they require, either as a single service or a combination of services.
- **Residential Care** helps people live in a place that provides the accommodation and level of support they need. This guide highlights three key types of residential care settings: Supportive Housing, Retirement Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities.

Overview of the Options

Home and Community Support Services	Residential Care Settings
1. Visiting health professional services Services of visiting health professionals (e.g., a nurse or physiotherapist) to plan and provide care. Supplies and equipment relating to these services may also be available. **2. Personal care and support** Assistance with a variety of daily living activities such as hygiene and bathing, dressing, going to the bathroom, help with meal preparation and eating, etc. **3. Homemaking** Help with household activities such as shopping, light housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, paying bills, etc. **4. Community support services** A variety of types of services such as, meals (either home delivered or in a group), transportation, caregiver support services (e.g., respite), adult day programs, social or recreational services, security checks, etc.	**1. Supportive housing** Rental apartments or group residences with government-funded services on-site, such as homemaking and personal care and support. Many locations offer rent-geared-to-income support for eligible applicants. **2. Retirement homes** Rental housing residences (without government-funded care or subsidized rent) with minimal to moderate levels of on-site support, such as meals, homemaking, and personal care and support. **3. Long-term care facilities** Government-regulated and funded facilities (residents pay for accommodation charges) designed for people who need the availability of 24-hour nursing care and supervision or higher levels of personal care and support.

Considering What's Right for You – *Introduction*

As you explore your options, you may be wondering – what's right for me? How do I decide what kind of care I need? Which options will best allow me to live my life with the most independence possible?

Some people choose to use a combination of home and community support services to stay in their own home for as long as possible. Others choose to move to a place with on-site care and opportunities for social interaction.

The fact is, finding what's right for you will depend on your personal situation. Here are some factors to consider:

Reflecting upon your personal situation

1 *Needs*

What level of care do I need?

Your need for support is one of the most important factors in determining the option that is right for you. Different types of home and community support services and residential settings offer different levels and types of care.

2 *Preferences*

What is important to me?
What do I value?

Each care option has advantages and disadvantages. What one person considers an advantage, another might consider a disadvantage. Understanding your preferences is a key part of the decision-making process.

Support Network
What help can my family and friends provide?

For many people, their family and friends can be an important source of support. Depending on the circumstances, you may be able to meet some or all of your needs with the help of family and friends. Often, people mix the help from people they know with help from provider organizations.

Eligibility
What services am I eligible for?

To ensure that government-funded services are directed to those who need them the most, there is a process of determining your eligibility that usually means the individuals with higher or more urgent needs are given priority.

The government sets eligibility criteria for services provided by CCACs to establish who the service is designed to serve, and how priority decisions are made. Eligibility criteria for services are either set by the government, or by the provider organization.

You can find out about your eligibility by talking to the staff at your local CCAC or individual provider organizations directly. For more details, please see Chapter 4, Arranging Care, pages 33 to 36.

Availability
What services are available in my community?

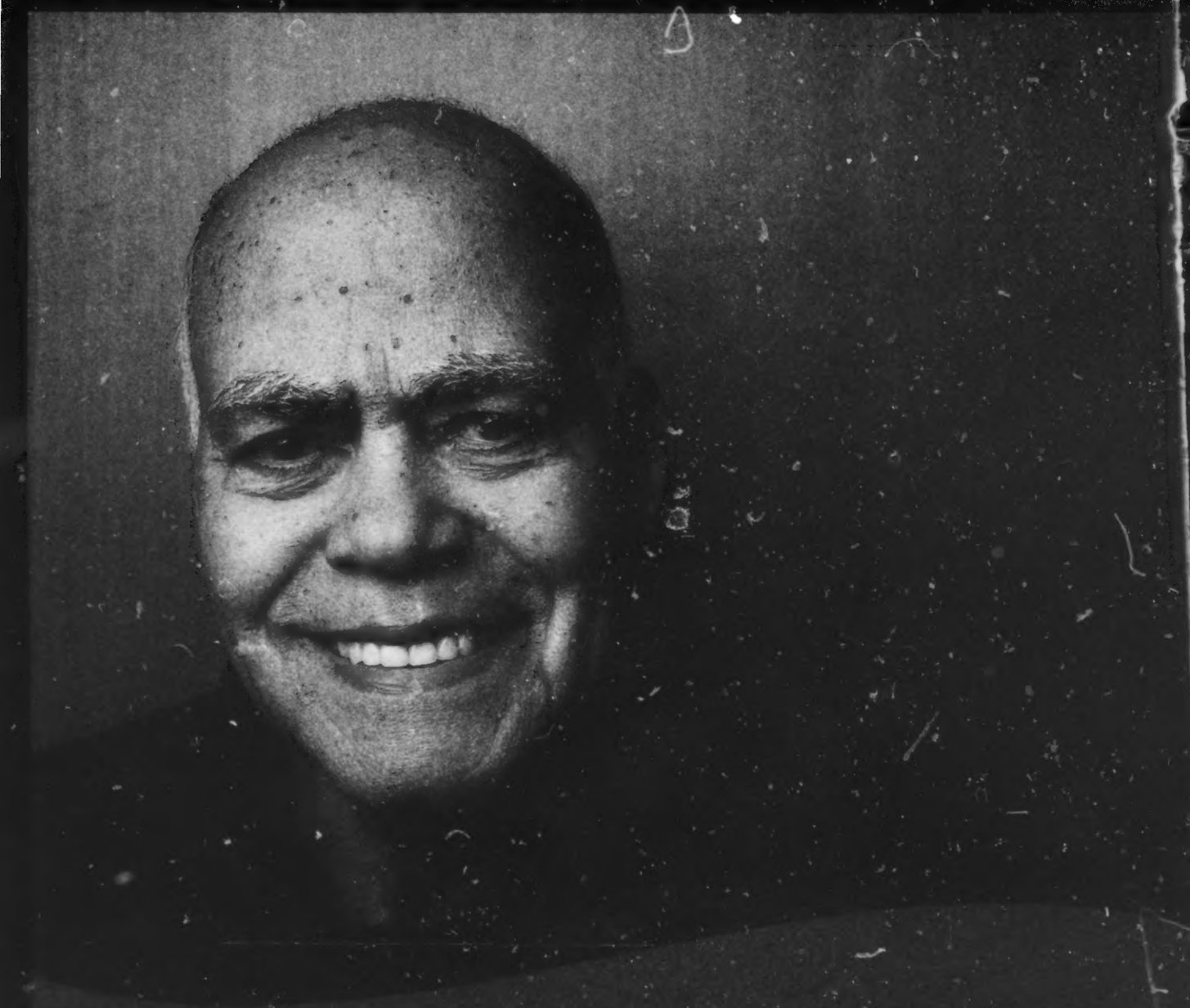
Some services have a minimum standard of availability throughout the province. Other services are only available in a particular area or region and will vary if your community is within a city versus a rural area. Another aspect of availability is the length of the waiting list. If there are long wait times, then the service or setting will be less readily available; however, all efforts will be made to help those in need.

Finances
What can I afford?

For most people, their financial situation is an important factor. There are a number of ways to make the costs more affordable. Many people find that sharing costs across a combination of family, community, government and privately funded services is a cost-effective strategy.

Time
How much time do I have to make a decision?

Do you know whether you have to make decisions in the next six months, three months, or a few weeks? The level of urgency or the timeframe for making decisions will affect the time available to research the options and arrange for care. If you only have a few weeks, then you will need to move quickly towards arranging care, and if necessary, selecting a provider.



Chapter 2: Home and Community Options

- Exploring Home and Community Support Services
- Considering What's Right for You

Chapter 2: Home and Community Options

Exploring Home and Community Support Services

There are four categories of home and community support services.

1. **Visiting Health Professional Services**
2. **Personal Care and Support**
3. **Homemaking**
4. **Community Support Services**

These services can be *funded* by various sources, including:

- the government (provincial and/or municipal);
- donations to voluntary organizations (who often deliver community support services);
- private insurance or benefit plans (e.g., private health insurance);
- the individual (e.g., by purchasing their own services privately).

Sources that help to *deliver* services include:

- family and friends;
- volunteers or voluntary groups within your community;
- provider organizations (see definition on page 3);
- commercial retailers;
- community centres.

In general, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care provides funding for:

- Visiting Health Professional Services
- Personal Care and Support
- Homemaking

Your local CCAC determines eligibility and levels of service available.

While the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care may provide partial funding for some community support services (category #4), CCACs do not determine eligibility (except some respite services) or service levels, and the individual usually pays a fee for the service.

It is quite common for seniors to find solutions by mixing the different sources of funding and delivering services.

As you review the following section, remember that the availability of the services will vary according to the area that you live in.

Chapter 2: Home and Community Options

1. Visiting Health Professional Services

Visiting health professionals can help you to maintain or improve your health, or teach you how to manage a health condition. These services can be provided temporarily, if you are adjusting after being in hospital, or on an ongoing basis. Services can include: assessing your needs, planning and providing care, or teaching you to care for yourself.

The types of health professionals are described below:

Nursing Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) can assess your health needs, plan and evaluate your care, and teach or supervise others to perform certain tasks. For example, a nurse may come into your home to change the dressing on a wound. The nurse may also teach you (or your caregiver) about how to change the dressing, the signs to watch for, and how to handle any problems that may arise.

Physiotherapy Physiotherapists assess your physical functioning and work to improve or prevent further problems. For example, after hip surgery they may assess your mobility, teach you how to do strengthening exercises and measure you for a cane or walker.

Occupational therapy Occupational therapists assess your day-to-day functioning and recommend ways to increase this functioning. For example, if your arthritis is getting worse, they may make recommendations, such as using special cutlery for eating or recommend ways to make a favourite chair easier to use.

Social work Social workers provide information and counselling to help you and your family adapt to changes in your physical abilities or other changes. They can also help you develop a plan for meeting your social and emotional needs.

Speech-language Speech language pathologists assess your speech and language abilities and help improve or maintain these abilities. For example, following a stroke, they might help you to regain the ability to speak.

Dietetic services Dietitians assess your nutritional status and provide a plan to help improve or maintain your nutritional health. For example, if you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, they might look at your current eating habits and work with you to develop new menus.

Note: If you are receiving visiting health professional services through your CCAC, there can be times when supplies are provided. Long-term use of equipment (e.g., walker, bath bench or hospital bed) can be available by rental, loan or purchase, if required.

If you are eligible for services coordinated by your CCAC, visiting health professional services are arranged by the CCAC and paid for by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). Otherwise, these services can be arranged directly with home health care providers, in which case there will be a consumer fee.

2. Personal Care and Support

Personal Care and Support refers to the help you can get with a range of essential daily living activities. There are many titles given to the workers who provide this type of care, such as "Personal Support Worker (PSW), Health Care Aide, Personal Care Worker or Attendant." The staff person can visit your home to help with:

- personal hygiene such as washing and bathing, mouth care, hair care, preventive skin care, routine hand or foot care;
- transferring or positioning into a chair, vehicle or bed;
- dressing and undressing;
- assistance with eating;
- assistance with toilet;
- escorting to appointments.

The staff person will either provide the help you need, or just "be there" to ensure your safety while you complete the activities yourself. They may also help you maintain a safe and comfortable home by helping with homemaking tasks.

If you are eligible for services coordinated by the CCAC, personal care and support services are arranged by the CCAC and paid for by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). Otherwise, these services can be arranged directly with providers, in which case there is likely to be a consumer fee. Subsidies may be available depending upon your financial circumstances.

3. Homemaking

To help you maintain a safe and comfortable home, homemaking services can assist you with routine household activities including menu planning and meal preparation, shopping, light housecleaning and laundry, paying bills or banking.

If you are eligible for services coordinated by the CCAC, homemaking services are paid for by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). Otherwise, these services can be arranged directly with providers, in which case there may be a consumer fee. Subsidies may be available depending upon your financial circumstances.

4. Community Support Services

Community supports help you stay healthy and independent while living at home. There are many services that can be delivered in your home or in other community locations, such as a community centre.

Community Support Services are usually delivered by people working or volunteering for a charitable or non-profit organization.

> For a complete listing of community support services in your area, contact your local CCAC. For provincial listings of services, call the Ontario Community Support Association at 1-800-256-3010 or visit their website at www.ocsa.on.ca, and click on "care guide".

This section describes each of the community support services that may be available in your area. *For most of the following services, there can be a consumer fee. Subsidies can be available for some but not all of the listed services, depending upon your financial circumstances.*

Security

There are three types of services that can help you feel safe and secure if you are living alone or feeling isolated.

Security checks Security checks involve a volunteer contacting you on a regular basis, by phone or in person, to see if you need help. You can also call this person if you need help.
There is no consumer fee for this service.

Friendly visits Friendly visits involve a volunteer coming to your home on a regular basis and sometimes taking you on an errand such as shopping or banking.
There is no consumer fee for this service.

Emergency response Emergency response systems are operated by commercial retailers and use technology to help you communicate in an emergency, 24 hours a day. For example, if you subscribe to this service, you might wear a call button on a necklace. If you fall in the middle of the night and cannot get up, you press the button and you will receive help.
There is a consumer fee for this service.

Meal services

There are several ways for you to obtain nutritious meals. Meals can be delivered to your home, or you can travel to a place where you can enjoy a meal with others.

Delivered Meals Meals-on-Wheels agencies deliver prepared meals to your home. Meals can be delivered once a day for up to seven days a week, depending on your needs and the service availability in your area. Volunteers delivering the meals also provide social contact and an informal check on your health and safety.
There is a consumer fee for this service to cover cost of the food and its preparation (e.g., $4 – $10 per meal). Subsidies may be available.

Congregate Dining, Wheels-to-Meals, Diners Club Wheels-to-Meals or Congregate Dining can provide transportation from your home to a dining hall to join others for a nutritious meal.
There is a consumer fee for this service to cover the cost of the food and its preparation (e.g., $4 – $10 per meal). If transportation to/from dining hall is required, total costs can be up to $22 per attendance. Subsidies may be available.

Commercial retailers There are also a growing number of grocery stores/retailers who offer delivery of fresh or frozen meals for a fee.

Transportation

If you need support getting to your destination safely, a variety of options are available for medical appointments, shopping, social activities and programs.

Family and friends Your family or a friend may be available to help you, or you can call a taxi.

Escorted transportation If you require transportation due to physical or cognitive impairments, escorted transportation can help with essential appointments and activities. Transportation may be a volunteer's car or a community vehicle depending on your needs and what is available in your area.
There is a consumer fee for this service to cover cost of your transportation (e.g., between 20¢ and 45¢ per kilometre). Subsidies may be available.

Municipal public transit In some municipalities, public transit can provide door-to-door or wheelchair accessible public transportation, if you qualify (usually for health reasons) for this type of service.
The consumer pays a set fare for this service.

Community specialized transit Transportation may be offered by organizations such as service clubs (e.g., Rotary or Lions Clubs), religious or other charitable groups to assist you in getting to medical appointments or programs.
There may be a consumer fee for this service depending upon the policy of the sponsoring agency.

Caregiver Support and Respite

There are various ways to help the regular caregiver, who is often a family member, to have a break or have time for themselves. These services are called respite care services, and there are three ways that they can be provided: in-home respite, adult day programs, and short-stay respite.

In-home respite In-home respite brings someone to your own home to provide help with needed services (e.g., personal care) and to allow a regular family caregiver to take a break.

Adult day programs Adult day programs provide social and other therapeutic activities at a location outside your home, while the regular caregiver takes a break.

Programs usually include planned recreation and physical activities, meals, transportation to the program and some personal care.

If you are eligible for services coordinated by the CCAC, in-home respite and adult day programs are paid for by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). Otherwise, these services can be arranged directly with providers, in which case there may be a consumer fee.

There is a consumer fee for adult day programs to cover the costs of meals and transportation, if any (approximately $15 – $48 per day). Subsidies may be available.

Short-stay respite (in a long-term care facility) Short-stay respite is the temporary care provided within a long-term care facility. *There is a consumer fee (co-payment) that covers the cost of accommodation and meals in a long-term care facility (approximately $31 per day).*

For more information on short-stay services in a long-term care facility, refer to Chapter 3, Residential Care, page 26.

Volunteer Hospice

Emotional support and physical help is available if you or a loved one requires end-of-life care. An assessment is completed to determine the individual and/or their caregiver's specific needs. Hospice volunteers visit people at home to provide needed supports.

Caregiver Support Groups and Counselling

This support can help to meet a caregiver's social and emotional needs. It is provided to caregivers and family members either in a group or in individual sessions.

Individual counselling A health care professional, such as a psychologist, social worker or a nurse, can listen to your concerns and provide emotional support and advice. Your friends, family, and members of your religious community may also be able to provide you with informal support. *There may be a consumer fee for this service. Subsidies may be available.*

Caregiver Training, Information and Education

Education and Training is available to assist the caregivers or family members to provide the appropriate care for an individual.

Caregiver education groups vary in terms of what they offer (e.g., educational or emotional support) and the types of participants. Look for a group that makes you feel comfortable and meets your needs for information and support.
There may be a consumer fee for this service depending upon the policy of the sponsoring agency.

Home Maintenance and Repair
For heavy home maintenance tasks, such as yard maintenance, snow shovelling, washing windows, and one-time repair jobs such as plumbing or electrical work, there are agencies and/or commercial retailers that can help to coordinate these services for you.
The consumer usually pays the worker or company directly, and a community agency may help to arrange these services.

Foot Care
Assistance with trimming your toenails, monitoring the condition of your feet and bathing and massaging your feet is available to help you with your foot care.
There may be a consumer fee for this service, depending upon the policy of the sponsoring agency.

Social/Recreational Programs
There are several types of community centres offering social services, educational and recreational activities, and encouraging seniors to have community involvement and intergenerational contact. Some of these centres are referred to as "Older Adult Centres". These centres directly involve seniors in a variety of ways, such as serving on the board of directors, advising on program planning, and acting as volunteers.

A note about Supportive Housing
Supportive housing provides rental accommodation with on-site personal care and support, and essential homemaking. Supportive housing is generally considered a community service. However, since this option may require a person to *move* to a place that offers on-site care, Supportive Housing has also been included within the residential care category of this guide. For full details see Chapter 3, Residential Care, page 20.

Considering what's right for you – *Home and Community*

Finding the right mix of home and community support services for you will depend on your personal situation.

When considering what is right for you, remember that you can use one service, or a combination of several services, depending upon your care needs, eligibility, and the types of services available in your area.

A Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) staff member can help you to determine your best options.

Here are the factors to consider in exploring what is right for you:

1 *Needs*

What level of care do I need?
What are the types of care I need?

The level of care you need depends upon the nature of the tasks you need help with, and the length of time it takes to complete these tasks. The stability of your condition and the extent to which you require the services of a health professional is a key variable. As you reflect upon your current day-to-day life, consider:

- Am I able to:
  - prepare all my own meals?
  - bathe safely without help?
  - dress and undress without help?
  - clean and maintain my home?
  - travel to a clinic or hospital to receive health services?
- Do I feel safe and secure in my home?

If you answered **no** to any of the questions, then you may benefit from home and community support services. *The type, frequency, and level of support* you need will affect your selection of services. Also, whether you are living alone or with someone who can help you affects the type and level of care you need.

2 *Your preferences*

What is important to me?
What do I value most?

If you are thinking of staying in your home, here are some questions to consider:

- Do you prefer to have a family member or friend provide a certain type of care, or a paid caregiver?
- Do you prefer to receive services in your own home? Or would you prefer a community program that allows you to interact with others?

These factors will influence your choices for how services are arranged and delivered, and their respective costs.

3 *Support network*

What help can my family and friends provide?

You may also be able to arrange for help from your friends, family members, neighbours, or volunteers. The availability and appropriateness of a family member or friend carrying out a particular task will also influence your planning. In considering what might be possible, some questions to ask are:

- Are there tasks that require a health professional or trained worker?
- Do I have a family member or friend that can help me with this task? If so, how often might they be available?
- Can I rely upon my friends or family in this way?

It is usually the combination of both friends and family and paid staff that enable you to stay at home. *Finding the right mix* will enable you to meet your needs.

4 *Eligibility*

What home and community support services am I eligible for?

To ensure that government-funded resources are directed to those who need them the most, there is a process of determining your eligibility that usually means the individuals with higher or more urgent needs are given priority.

The government sets eligibility criteria for services administered through the CCACs. The criteria define who the service is designed to serve, and how priority decisions are made. Eligibility criteria for other types of services are either set by the government, or directly by the provider organization.

You can find out about your eligibility by talking to your CCAC or directly to provider organizations. For more details, please see Chapter 4, Arranging Care, page 33.

5 *Availability*

What home and community support services options are available in my area?

The availability of services (e.g., service types, levels and waiting times) will vary throughout the province. For example, people with greater or more urgent needs receive services more quickly and/or higher levels of service. Or, depending on where you live, you may obtain a service in a different way. For example, frozen meals delivered once a week may be the only option available in your area instead of having hot meals delivered daily.

The staff at your CCAC can tell you what services are available in your area.

Remember...your Community Care Access Centre can help you

in assessing your needs and personal situation, determining your eligibility, locating providers and applying for care. Your local CCAC can also tell you about the financial subsidies that may be available for particular service options.

6 *Finances*

What can I afford?

For most people, their financial situation is an important factor. When looking at each option, consider:

- the level of government funding or subsidies available;
- the other types of funding available to you, such as private health insurance plans;
- the support available from family and friends;
- the support available from charitable organizations (e.g., religious groups or non-profit community agencies);
- your own financial resources.

Many people find that combining the sources of support and funding is a cost-effective strategy.

7 *Time*

How much time do I have to make a decision?

Do you know whether you have to make decisions in the next six months, three months, or a few weeks? The level of urgency (including the risks of delaying decisions) and the time you have to make a decision will influence how much research you can do.

The earlier you have an assessment for the care you may need, the more flexibility you have to research your care options. As you develop your plan, also keep in mind that certain services and providers may have a waiting list.

Talk to your local CCAC first.

To locate the CCAC nearest you, call the Ontario Ministry of Health Infoline:

1-877-234-4343 (in Toronto, 416-314-5518)

or visit **www.health.gov.on.ca**

and click on *Seniors' Care*, then Community Care Access Centre Locator.

TTY: **1-800-387-5559**

Note: Information queries can be handled in over 15 different languages.

Chapter 3: Residential Care Options

- Exploring Residential Care Options
- Comparing the Residential Care Settings
- Considering What's Right for You – *Residential Care*

Chapter 3: Residential Care Options

Exploring Residential Care Options

1. Supportive Housing

What is Supportive Housing?

This option is designed for seniors (or individuals with a disability) who need moderate levels of personal care and support to live independently. There are various styles of supportive housing. Often the accommodation is an apartment or a group residence with the potential for rent-geared-to-income subsidies.

The buildings are owned and operated by municipal governments or non-profit groups (e.g., seniors' organizations, service clubs, or religious or cultural groups) and sometimes private corporations.

How to apply

You can apply directly to the supportive housing provider you have chosen. Your local Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) can provide a list of supportive housing providers in your area.

Eligibility

Applicants must require personal care and support on a daily basis, and require 24-hour availability of such services, to be eligible.

What does Supportive Housing offer?

There are two types of accommodation available:

Apartments: Singles or couples live in fully equipped bachelor, one- or two- bedroom apartments. At some locations, a small number of supportive units are integrated into a building where most of the other tenants do not need support. At other locations, most if not all of the tenants require support services.

Shared Living: Group settings where tenants have their own bedroom but may share a bathroom and kitchen/dining areas.

Services Services typically include: personal care and support (daily and on a 24-hour "back-up" basis), and essential homemaking.

Tenants can also apply for visiting health professional services through the local CCAC or obtain other community support services if additional services are required.

Costs

Accommodation costs are based on market rents for similar apartments.

If you are eligible, the government may subsidize your rent, so that you only pay up to 30% of your household's monthly income. There is usually a waiting list for subsidized units.

To be eligible for a rent subsidy, you must be a Canadian citizen, landed immigrant or refugee claimant. If you own your own home, you must sell it within six months of moving to a subsidized apartment. Local governments can put other limits on the assets or income you may have to qualify for a rent subsidy.

The service costs are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. There is no consumer fee for services unless you have requested the optional services offered (e.g., social or recreational outings or hairdressing).

Contracts/service agreements
In becoming a tenant of a supportive housing project, you will sign a lease with the landlord. You will also sign a service contract with the service provider, describing the services to be provided, and noting any fees for optional services you may have requested. Note: Sometimes the landlord and service provider are the same organization.

Government legislation and monitoring
The housing portion of supportive housing is covered by the *Tenant Protection Act, 1997.*

The services that are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) are covered by the *Long-Term Care Act, 1994.* The regional offices of the MOHTLC monitor the provider organizations that deliver supportive housing.

Social housing for seniors is affordable housing (with or without support services) for seniors or other groups with low to moderate incomes. Municipal governments fund and administer all social housing. The actual landlord can be a municipality, non-profit or private corporation. **For more details on how to find social housing in a given area, see Chapter 6, Resources, page 48.**

2. Retirement Homes

What is a retirement home?

Retirement homes are privately owned rental accommodation for seniors who are able to manage and pay for their own care.

Generally, retirement homes are designed for seniors who need minimal to moderate support with activities of daily living. These settings enable residents to live as independently as possible, while providing certain services and social activities. Retirement homes can also be called "Retirement Residences" or "Assisted Living" complexes.

How to apply

You can apply directly to the retirement home provider. You do not need to provide medical evidence that you need a minimum level of care. The home, however, may assess your needs to ensure that you receive appropriate support, or that you meet its eligibility criteria.

Your local Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) can provide a list of retirement homes in your area. The Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA) website and a printed directory also provide listings of member retirement homes across Ontario. See Chapter 6, Resources, page 42 for further information.

Eligibility

The eligibility criteria will vary significantly across retirement homes due to the variation in services and accommodation offered.

What do retirement homes offer?

Accommodations Accommodations range from shared rooms, bachelor or one-bedroom apartments to two-bedroom apartments. The amenities of retirement homes vary considerably. Most retirement homes have dining rooms and common areas or lounges. Some homes have other amenities such as a gift shop, beauty salon, chapel, library, garden, or rooms for social events. Note: Some provider organizations that operate retirement homes may also operate a long-term care facility. This can affect the amenities available.

Services Most retirement homes offer meals, housekeeping, laundry, recreational and social programs. The types and levels of homemaking, personal care, and other services offered by retirement homes vary significantly, as do their costs. **Retirement homes can be an appropriate option for people who *do not* require 24-hour nursing care**.

Costs (per person) *Since retirement homes are not funded by the provincial government, you are responsible for the total cost of both your accommodation and care.*
Typically, retirement homes offer a package of accommodation and services. Fees can range from approximately $1500 to $5000 per month for a private room and services. You may arrange to purchase additional services or higher levels of services.

Retirement homes can offer flexibility. For example, you can often choose to opt in or out of meal plans and other services. You may also leave for extended periods of time (such as for a vacation) and retain your tenancy as long as you continue to pay your rent and fees. If you are hospitalized indefinitely, or you decide to move, you must give 30 days written notice prior to leaving your accommodation.

Service agreements or contracts If you move to a retirement home, the retirement home owner becomes your landlord. **As a requirement of the *Tenant Protection Act 1997* you must be provided with a lease or a Written Tenancy Agreement and a Care Home Information Package (CHIP). The CHIP documents should be signed before you move in. These documents describe your accommodation and service package, the fees for services, the home's staffing levels and qualifications, the emergency response system, and the complaint procedure.**

Government legislation and monitoring Except for public health issues, retirement homes are not funded or regulated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The tenancy is governed by the *Tenant Protection Act 1997*. The accommodation and food preparation in retirement homes are regulated by the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the associated guidelines for safe meal preparation, sanitation and water quality. All kitchen facilities are regularly inspected by local Public Health departments. Some municipal governments also have created by-laws to govern care and services.

3. Long-Term Care Facilities

What are long-term care facilities?

Long-term care facilities are designed for people who require the availability of 24-hour nursing services, daily assistance with personal care, and/or require a secure environment. Long-term care facilities offer higher levels of care than are typically offered in either retirement homes or supportive housing.

They are owned and operated by various types of organizations:

- **Nursing homes** are usually operated by privately owned corporations, and in some cases by non-profit organizations.
- **Municipal homes for the aged** are owned by municipal governments. Many municipalities are required to operate a home for the aged in their area, either on their own or in partnership with another municipality.
- **Charitable homes for the aged** are owned by private non-profit charities, such as faith or community groups, or cultural groups.

How to apply

Apply through the CCAC. The only way to apply for admission to a long-term care facility is through a CCAC. During the application process, you can choose up to three facilities (except when you require immediate admission or you are applying for short-stay).

Eligibility

A senior is eligible for a long-term care facility if he/she:

- has an OHIP card;
- has care requirements that can be met in the facility;
- has care requirements that cannot be met by the publicly-funded community-based services available, and none of the other caregiving support or companionship arrangements are sufficient, while he/she is living in their own residence.

In addition, the person must need **one** of the following:

- availability of nursing care 24-hours a day;
- daily assistance with personal care;
- supervision throughout the day;
- protection from the risk of being financially, emotionally or physically harmed if the applicant lives in his or her current residence;
- protection from risk of harm to self or another in his or her current residence.

A note about the eligibility of a spouse
If you are eligible for admission to a facility under the criteria set out above, or you have already been admitted to a facility, your spouse or partner may be eligible for admission to the same facility if he/she has an OHIP card and his/her care requirements can be met at the same facility. You can make these arrangements through your local CCAC.

For more details on the eligibility criteria and application process, please contact your CCAC to obtain the handbook called "Accessing a Long-Term Care Facility."

For contact information about your local CCAC, please see Chapter 6, Resources, page 43.

Chapter 3: Residential Care Options

What do long-term care facilities offer?

Accommodations Long-term care facilities offer a variety of accommodation options. People living in a facility pay a fee for accommodation, which is based on the type of accommodation chosen. "Preferred" accommodation is the term often used to describe a private or semi-private room with special features, whereas "basic or standard" accommodation refers to the style of rooms that the facility ordinarily offers. The features of the "basic accommodation" will vary according to when the particular facility was constructed or renovated.

Most long-term care facilities have dining rooms and common rooms. Many also have features like a lounge, gift shop, beauty salon, chapel, or garden.

Services All long-term care facilities offer 24-hour supervision and nursing care. The services offered as part of the basic package include:

- Furnishings (e.g., bed, chair), meals (including special diets), bed linens and laundry, personal hygiene supplies, medical/clinical supplies and devices for general use (e.g., walkers and wheelchairs for occasional use), housekeeping, pastoral services, social and recreational programs, therapy supports, medication administration, and assistance with the activities of daily living.
- Nursing and personal care services on a 24-hour basis and access to a physician, as well as other health professionals.
- Optional services can be available for a fee. These may include: hairdressing, cable TV and telephone services, financial services (e.g., banking), or transportation, and so on.

Facilities prepare a "plan of care" for each resident, which is reviewed and adapted at least every three months. Annual care conferences are held with the family of a resident.

Costs (per person) *The MOHLTC provides funding for long-term care facilities. The amount paid by residents for their accommodation is called a "co-payment," which varies according the accommodation type. The co-payment also varies if the resident is in the long-stay or short-stay program:*

"Long Stay" refers to accommodations that are obtained for an indefinite period of time.

"Short Stay" refers to two types of temporary accommodation at a facility. The "Respite Service" provides a caregiver with a break from caregiving duties. The "Supportive Care Service" gives the resident time to regain strength and confidence, for example, following a stay in a hospital. The length of this stay can vary, and the maximum stay is 90 days per year. Your local CCAC determines your eligibility for short-stay and helps arrange the actual number of days you might stay "at one time."

Please refer to the cost chart on the next page for the range of co-payments depending upon the type of accommodation selected.

Government Subsidies If your income is not sufficient to pay the accommodation co-payment for the long-stay program, there is a subsidy available to reduce the rate for "basic" accommodation.

Residents with lower incomes or residents who have spouses or partners who are living in the community may be eligible for an additional subsidy called the **"Exceptional Circumstances Reduction."** For more information, you can refer to the handbook called **"Accessing a Long-Term Care Facility"** or speak to staff at your local CCAC, or at a long-term care facility.

The MOHLTC sets maximum accommodation co-payment rates. The following table shows the co-payment rates effective July 1, 2003. The co-payment rates change from time to time. For the most up-to-date rates, contact the staff at your local CCAC.

Long-Stay Program		Maximum Daily Co-Payment	Maximum Monthly Co-Payment
Basic or Standard Accommodation	Various styles (depending on when facility was constructed or renovated)	$48.69	$1480.99
Preferred Accommodation	Semi-private accommodation	$56.69 (Basic rate plus a maximum of $8.00)	$1724.32
Preferred Accommodation	Private accommodation	$66.69 (Basic rate plus a maximum of $18.00)	$2028.49
Short-Stay Program		$31.67 per day	Not Applicable

Optional services (e.g., cable TV or hairdressing) can be purchased for an additional fee.

Chapter 3: Residential Care Options

Government legislation and monitoring
There are three pieces of legislation governing long-term care facilities. These are: the *Homes for the Aged and Rest Homes Act*, *the Nursing Homes Act*, and the *Charitable Institutions Act*. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) sets the rules governing the CCAC administration of admissions and eligibility determination.

The MOHLTC also sets standards for care and inspects long-term care facilities annually. Facilities are required to post this inspection report and make them available to residents, their families and prospective residents. **To obtain a facility's inspection report (often called a "compliance review") you can ask the facility directly or contact your MOHLTC regional office.**

To locate the MOHLTC regional offices in your area call the Info-Line at 1-877-234-4343.

The MOHLTC also provides a funding incentive to encourage facilities to achieve standards set out by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). For more information about CCHSA accreditation, refer to Chapter 5, Selecting a Provider, page 40.

If you need more care than a long-term care facility can provide...
"Complex continuing care," once known as "chronic care," is hospital care for people whose requirements for care are beyond what a long-term care facility can provide. For more information, contact your physician.

	Retirement homes	Supportive housing	Long-term care facilities (Long-Stay Program)
Also referred to as...	Retirement residence, care home, assisted living, rest home.	Non-profit housing, social housing, seniors' housing.	Nursing homes or homes for the aged.
Level of care	Individuals or couples who need help with meals, homemaking, low levels of personal care, and availability of staff on a 24-hour basis.	Individuals or couples who need daily help with meals, homemaking, personal care, 24-hour availability of a trained personal support worker.	Individuals who need higher levels of daily personal care, the availability of 24-hour nursing care or supervision, or a secure environment.
Accommodation style	Ranges from shared rooms to bachelor, one- or two-bedroom apartments.	Ranges from shared living to bachelor, to one- or two-bedroom apartments.	Ranges from rooms with four people, to semi-private and private rooms.
Owned and managed by	Private corporations and in a few cases, non-profit corporations.	Municipal governments, non-profit corporations and in a few cases private corporations. (Service provider organizations are non-profit corporations.)	Municipal governments, non-profit corporations or private corporations.
Governing legislation	*Tenant Protection Act, 1997.* Some municipalities may also have "care home" by-laws.	*Tenant Protection Act, 1997* (for tenancy). *Long-Term Care Act, 1994* (for service provision).	*Homes for the Aged and Rest Homes Act, Nursing Homes Act, and Charitable Institutions Act.*
Accreditation	Voluntary accreditation through the *Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA).*	Voluntary accreditation through the *Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA).*	Voluntary Accreditation through the *Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA).*

	Retirement homes	Supportive housing	Long-term care facilities
Cost ranges (per person)	Costs for accommodation and care can range from $1500 to $5000/month for a private room.	Rental costs vary according to market rent but usually range from $600 to $1200/month. Rent subsidies are available in some locations. The support service costs are covered by MOHLTC.	Ask your CCAC staff what the most up-to-date rates are. The maximum monthly resident co-payment rates effective July 1, 2003 are: • $1480.99 per month for "standard or basic" accommodation, • $1724.32 for semi-private accommodation, and • $2028.49 per month for "private" accommodation.
Government funding	None.	Government can subsidize the rent to the level of 30% of gross household income for those who qualify. The MOHLTC funds the support services.	Government can provide a subsidy for the accommodation, up to the "basic" accommodation rate for those who quality. The MOHLTC funds the care provided in facilities.
How to select and apply	You select and apply directly to the provider.	You select and apply directly to the provider.	Your local CCAC coordinates application, and you select up to three providers (unless you require immediate admission).

Considering what's right for you – *Residential Care*

The following factors will influence your personal situation. Keeping these factors in mind will help you consider which residential care option is right for you.

1 *Needs*
What types of care do I need?

The type and frequency of care you need is an important factor in choosing which residential option is right for you.

- If you only need occasional homemaking, meals, some personal support, and someone available on a 24-hour basis, **then a retirement home may be an option.**
- If you require frequent and daily personal support, help with meals and homemaking, along with the 24-hour availability of a trained personal support worker, **then supportive housing may be an option.**
- If you need 24-hour availability of nursing care and/or supervision, and high levels of daily personal care and support, then **a long-term care facility may be an option.**

2 *Your preferences*
What is important to me?
What do I value?

In comparing residential settings, consider your preferences and how these affect your choices.

Here are some questions to consider:

- Does the provider allow, or require, residents to bring furnishings?
- Does the provider's operating philosophy match your values?
- Does the provider have a cultural or religious affiliation?
- Are guests welcome to join for meals or social events?
- Is the residence located near family or friends?

3 *Support network*
What help can my family and friends provide?

In comparing residential settings, consider the types of help available from friends, family members, neighbours, or volunteers. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Are there tasks that are not available in a particular setting that a friend or family member can help with?
- Do I have a family member or friend that might help me with this task? If so, how often might they be available (e.g., on a regular basis or only occasionally)?
- Am I comfortable relying on my friends or family in this way?

If your family or friends cannot help with essential tasks, then a residential setting may provide the help you need.

4 *Eligibility*
What options am I eligible for?

The services for which you are eligible will depend on the care you require and your personal situation.

The eligibility criteria for admission to long-term care facilities are set out on page 24. Your CCAC determines your eligibility for a long-term care facility, and provides information about subsidies to reduce the costs of accommodation at a facility.

For other residential care settings, the provider determines your eligibility.

5 *Availability*
What options are available in my area?

The waiting times and availability for all these settings vary extensively.

Most communities have a long-term care facility nearby. People with greater or more urgent needs usually receive a place in a long-term care facility more quickly. The CCAC manages the waiting lists for facilities and can tell you about waiting times.

The waiting times for retirement homes or supportive housing projects can be identified by the provider organization directly.

6 *Finances*
What can I afford?

As you explore your options, it is critical to understand the potential costs of each option. The costs of retirement homes vary significantly, whereas the costs of long-term care facilities are standardized. Therefore, the total amount that you might pay is affected by:

- whether the care is funded or subsidized by the government;
- whether the rent or accommodation charges have a maximum cost;
- the type of the accommodation and features of the physical space;
- changes in your service needs or requirements over time;
- the fees for optional services or amenities.

It is important to gather as much information as possible about the specific features and exact costs that you might pay for each option. Chapter 6, Resources and Checklists has tools to help you gather information according to your needs, preferences and finances.

7 *Time*
How much time do I have to make a decision?

The amount of time that you have to make a decision depends upon the urgency of your situation and an assessment of the risks that may arise by delaying a decision. Whether you need care within a few weeks or a few months, it is recommended that you leave yourself ample time to research your options. As you consider your options, keep in mind that certain types of settings or a particular location may have longer waiting times.

Chapter 4: Arranging Care

- Introduction
- Where to Start – Contact Your Local CCAC
- Arranging Care – Home and Community Options
- Arranging Care – Residential Care Services

Chapter 4: Arranging Care

Introduction

This chapter will review the steps required to arrange care for yourself or a member of your family, *once you know the type of care for which you are looking.* If you do not know the care option that you are seeking, then your CCAC can help you to determine the option that is right for you.

There are three aspects to arranging the care that are important to remember:

- determining your eligibility (or whether you qualify for a particular service or subsidy);
- selecting the organization(s) that will provide the service (a "provider organization");
- applying for care (and filling in the appropriate paperwork).

Where to Start – Contact Your Local CCAC

Community Care Access Centres are here to help you get started in assessing your needs and personal situation, determining your eligibility, locating providers and applying for care. Your CCAC can also provide information about the financial subsidies that may be available for particular service options.

The extent of CCAC involvement in arranging care varies with each option. However, CCAC staff can always connect you to the local service providers and answer questions during the steps in the process of arranging care.

Arranging Care – *Home and Community Options*

Contacting your CCAC to find out whether you are eligible for the government-funded services is your first step.

If you are eligible for government-funded services, then as this chart illustrates, the CCAC coordinates your application, and selects the provider for you.

If you are looking for...	**Who determines eligibility**	**Who coordinates the application**	**Who selects the provider**
Visiting Health Professional Services (if government-funded)	CCAC	CCAC	CCAC
Personal Care and Support (if government-funded)	CCAC	CCAC	CCAC
Homemaking (if government-funded)	CCAC	CCAC	CCAC
Community Support Services	The provider (except for some respite services)	You (except for some respite services)	You (except for some respite services)

If you do not qualify for the government-funded services arranged by your CCAC, or you wish to make your own arrangements, you will need to play a more direct role in arranging care. In these situations, you would begin by contacting the provider organizations to find out about your eligibility and apply for care.

In Chapter 5, you can find out how to gather information and select the provider organization(s) that best suits your situation.

Arranging Care – *Residential Care Settings*

As a first step, you can contact your CCAC to find out whether you are eligible for the government-funded settings such as supportive housing or long-term care facilities.

If you are eligible for the long-stay program at a long-term care facility, then as this chart illustrates, the CCAC coordinates your application, and **you select your top three choices of facilities.**

In all other cases, you will need to apply directly to the provider organization and confirm your eligibility with them.

If you are looking for...	Who coordinates the application	Who determines eligibility	Who selects the provider
Supportive Housing	You (apply directly to the provider)	The provider	You
Retirement Homes	You (apply directly to the provider)	The provider	You
Long-Term Care Facilities	CCAC	CCAC	You select up to three providers (except for short-stay programs or immediate admission)

If you are planning to move to a long-term care facility, ask your CCAC for the more detailed handbook about the process of applying and selecting a facility, **"Accessing a Long-Term Care Facility."**

For the other two residential options, Supportive Housing and Retirement Homes, your CCAC can provide contact information for the providers in your area. You can also do more research in several ways. For more information on how to do this research and compare the services of different provider organizations, see Chapter 5, Selecting a Provider.

Remember, regardless of your situation or the options you are considering, your local CCAC can provide resource information.

Chapter 5: Selecting a Provider

- Introduction
- Key Steps to Selecting a Provider

Chapter 5: Selecting a Provider

Introduction

It is important to find a provider that is right for you. This means the provider's scope of services and supports matches your personal situation, including your needs, preferences, financial resources, and other sources of support.

The previous chapter has demonstrated that for many of the options (except for the services arranged by the CCAC) you will likely need to be involved in selecting a provider organization.

This chapter is designed to help you gather information about possible providers. It will give you ideas and tips on how to compare and evaluate their services and amenities, eligibility criteria and performance records, so that you can make an informed decision.

Key Steps to Selecting a Provider

A provider organization delivers care to the client. They may also manage a building (e.g., long-term care facility). Providers will differ in the way they operate and provide services. Despite this variation, there are some generic steps to follow in selecting a provider. Given the importance of this decision, it is worth taking the time to ensure that the provider you select is right for you.

There are four key steps to selecting a provider:

1. **Identify possible providers**
2. **Gather more information about specific providers**
3. **Compare and evaluate providers**
4. **Decide on a provider**

1. Identify possible providers

You can get started by finding out whether you are eligible for government-funded services. If you are, then the CCAC makes the arrangements with the provider chosen for you.

However, if you choose to supplement the care services arranged by the CCAC, or are seeking the options not administered via the CCAC, you can start by obtaining a list (either in print or website) of providers in your area. Obtain this list from your CCAC or provincial associations of providers including:

- **For Home and Community Support Services** you can contact the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) or Ontario Home Health Care Providers Association (OHHCPA).
- **For Residential Options** you can contact Ontario Long-Term Care Association (OLTCA), the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors (OANHSS) for long-term care facilities, or the Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA) for retirement homes.

In addition, you may wish to contact:

- **Information-based groups** such as a Community Information Centre or commercial publications such as advertising directories or magazines.

See Chapter 6, Resources, to locate contact information for these organizations and more.

2. Gather more information about specific providers

Once you have developed a list of possible providers, you can start gathering more detailed information about specific providers to narrow down your selection.

Some of the key factors to consider are:

- **Ability to respond to your care needs** – Does the provider offer the type and level of services that you require?
- **Eligibility criteria** – What is the match between your care needs and personal situation and the provider eligibility criteria?
- **Availability** – What is the length of the waiting list (waiting time) for this provider?
- **Reputation** – What do people say about this service provider?
- **Cost** – What is the exact cost of the care? Are the fees standardized? Are there additional services or amenities that also can have a cost?

As you can see, there are several items to gather more detailed information about each provider.

In Chapter 6, Resources and Checklists, page 52, there are lists with a variety of questions you could use to find out the above information.

If you want to supplement this information with people's insights about a particular provider, there are several ways to find out more, including:

- meeting with a staff representative;
- touring a residential care setting;
- talking with former clients, residents and/or caregivers.

3. Compare and evaluate providers

By this point, you have probably gathered a considerable amount of information about possible providers.

You may already have a clear sense of which provider is right for you. If you do, then you are ready to make your decision.

On the other hand, you may be trying to decide between two or three providers. In this case, comparing providers is an important step.

You may find it helpful to compare providers against the criteria that are most important to you. For example, many people consider things like location, or the availability of specialized programs, as important criteria. Most people consider quality of services to be the key criterion.

Considering quality of care

As you research whether a provider delivers the care you need, a key source can be the opinions of people who have already received services from the provider.

Other important sources are the ratings by an independent organization. It can also be helpful to know whether the service is regulated by the provincial government or guided by the standards of a provincial association.

While there is no foolproof way to measure quality, there are some key questions to ask as you look for indications of the quality of care:

- Is the provider accredited by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA)? (Table 1)
- Is the provider accredited by another organization? (See Table 2)
- If the provider is a Long-Term Care Facility: Can the organization show you a copy of their most recent inspection report or Annual Compliance Review? (See page 28)
- Can the provider give you consumer or family references?
- Does the provider have results from a Consumer Satisfaction Survey?
- Have seniors advocacy organizations received complaints about that provider?

Table 1. About the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA)

Accreditation is an effective, internationally recognized evaluation process used by many countries worldwide to assess quality in health care organizations. A provider organization can voluntarily seek accreditation through the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA), an independent, non-government organization. The types of organizations generally accredited by CCHSA include hospitals, long-term care facilities, CCACs, and some home and community support services.

Only accredited providers can display the CCHSA seal. Here are some ways to find out if a provider is accredited.

- Look for a framed CCHSA certificate and seal inside the facility.
- Look for the seal or mention of CCHSA accreditation in promotional materials.
- Locate a listing of accredited organizations by visiting the CCHSA website: www.cchsa.ca under "About Accreditation." Click on "accredited organizations" to download the list.

Table 2. Other Accrediting Organizations

Retirement Home Accreditation

The CCHSA does not accredit retirement homes. However, retirement homes may seek accreditation from the Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA). ORCA is a voluntary, non-profit association that sets standards, inspects, and accredits retirement homes in Ontario. Only accredited providers can display the ORCA logo.

Here are some ways to find out whether a provider is accredited by ORCA:

- Look for a framed ORCA certificate and logo inside the building.
- Locate a listing of ORCA accredited organizations by visiting the ORCA website: www.orca-homes.com and click on "Find a retirement home."
- Or you can call ORCA at 1-800-361-7254 to request a printed directory of their accredited retirement homes, free of charge.

ISO 9001

Some home health care provider organizations have chosen to seek accreditation via the ISO 9001. This International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is a non-governmental organization established in 1947, and is designed to establish worldwide standards in the delivery of goods and services.

To find out about whether a provider is ISO certified, look for references to this within its promotional materials (i.e., print or website).

For more information on contacting these accrediting organizations, please see Chapter 6, Resources, page 50.

4. Decide on a provider

As you go through the research and comparing process, you will see variations in the way providers operate. Before you make your decision, be sure that you are satisfied with the information you have obtained about the provider. Take the time to review and reflect upon the information you have gathered, and talk it over with people who know you well.

Remember, as you make your decision, talk it over with family or friends, or call upon your local CCAC staff to answer questions you may have.

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

The following organizations can offer more detailed information about the topics within this guide:

- Provincial Government: Key resources
- Community Care Access Centres (CCACs)
- Provincial Associations of Provider Organizations
- Social Housing for Seniors
- Seniors' Advocacy Organizations
- Organizations that Accredit Providers
- Information-Based Providers

In addition to the resources contained within this guide, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS) has produced a comprehensive directory of resources for seniors on other topics, such as Housing, Finances, Emergency Services, Legal Matters, and Veteran Services and more.
Call toll-free: **1-888-910-1999** and ask for a copy of the **"Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario"** or visit the website: **www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/seniors**

Talk to your local CCAC first.

To locate the CCAC nearest you, call the Ontario Ministry of Health Infoline:
1-877-234-4343 (in Toronto, 416-314-5518)
or visit **www.health.gov.on.ca**
and click on *Seniors' Care*, then Community Care Access Centre Locator.
TTY: **1-800-387-5559**
Note: Information queries can be handled in over 15 different languages.

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Provincial Government – Key Resources

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

For information about home, community and residential care options, including a locator to help find all long-term care facilities and CCACs in Ontario:

- Website address: **www.health.gov.on.ca**, click on *Seniors' Care*

For information by telephone, including how to contact the corporate or regional offices of MOHLTC call:

- MOHLTC Infoline 1-877-234-4343 (toll-free in Ontario only). TTY: 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto call 416-314-5518.
- For 24-hour, free confidential telephone health advice from a Registered Nurse, call **Telehealth Ontario** toll-free at 1-866-797-0000.

Ministry of the Attorney General, Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

For information on **Powers of Attorney and Living Wills**:

- Website address: www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/ click on "Power of Attorney Kits"
- Telephone: 416-314-2800, or 1-800-366-0335.

Ministry of Citizenship, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS)

The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat functions to improve the quality of life for Ontario's seniors by undertaking policy initiatives for seniors with a multi-ministry focus, developing public education initiatives for and about seniors, and maintaining a close working relationship with Ontario's seven largest seniors organizations.

Publications include **"A Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario"** and **"A Guide to Advance Care Planning."** For copies of these publications, call the Seniors Infoline or visit the website.

- Website address: www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/seniors
- Telephone: (Seniors' Infoline) 1-888-910-1999. TTY: 1-800-387-5559.

Ministry of Consumer and Business Services: Publications Ontario

Publications Ontario provides quick and easy access to other Government of Ontario publications:

- Website address: www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/publications/home
- Telephone: 416-326-5300, or 1-800-668-9938.

Provincial Associations of Provider Organizations

HOME & COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA)

OCSA represents over 360 not-for-profit service agencies that deliver home care and community support services to individuals living at home. Their website offers a searchable database of service provider agencies, organized by regions of the province.

- Website address: www.ocsa.on.ca
- Telephone: 416-256-3010, 1-800-267-OCSA.

Ontario Home Health Care Providers' Association (OHHCPA)

OHHCPA represents home health care organizations that deliver health care services in the home. Its members are contracted by governments, CCACs, insurance companies, corporations and private individuals. Their website offers a listing of affiliated service providers.

- Website address: www.ohhcpa.on.ca
- Telephone: 905-543-9474.

Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC)

The Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres represent 26-member Friendship Centres across Ontario providing a wide range of community support services to Aboriginal people who reside off reserves. To locate the nearest Friendship centre, contact OFIFC at:

- Website address: www.ofifc.org
- Telephone: 416-956-7575.

Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres (OACCAC)

The OACCAC represents Community Care Access Centres, which are the local points of access and referral for home and community services, and long-term care facilities in Ontario.

- Website address: www.oaccac.on.ca
- Telephone: 416-750-1720.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors (OANHSS)

OANHSS is a provincial association that has represented the not-for-profit providers of community support services, seniors housing, and long-term care facilities for over 80 years. Member organizations operate over 25,000 long-term care beds and more than 5,000 housing units in Ontario.

- Website address: www.oanhss.org
- Telephone: 905-851-8821.

Ontario Long-Term Care Association (OLTCA)

OLTCA represents the providers of over 350 long-term care facilities and homes in the province. The members of OLTCA include all the types of governance for long-term care settings in Ontario – private, not-for-profit, charitable, and municipal. OLTCA members provide care and accommodation to over 35,000 Ontarians.

- Website address: www.oltca.com
- Telephone: 905-470-8995.

Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA)

ORCA is an association that accredits retirement homes in Ontario. There are several hundred retirement homes that meet the ORCA standards and are affiliated with the association. The ORCA website offers the feature of searching for the accredited members by city.

- Website address: www.orca-homes.com
- Telephone: 1-800-361-7254.
- Hot-Line: ORCA operates a toll-free phone line to respond to requests for information and complaints about retirement homes. This number is 1-800-361-7254.

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Social Housing for Seniors

The listing below can get you started on locating the government-subsidized and/ or lower cost housing that can accommodate seniors. If you are looking for more detailed information on seniors housing, see **"A Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario" (Chapter 4, Housing)** for a detailed description of housing options, and tips about how to locate seniors housing in your area. To obtain this guide, call 1-888-910-1999. Other sources to explore include:

Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA)

ONPHA is an association of non-profit housing organizations and provides high-quality affordable housing for low- and moderate-income people in communities across Ontario. For lists of local social housing and groups called "coordinated access groups" who can help you to find social housing visit:

- Website address: www.onpha.on.ca
- Telephone: 416-927-9144, or 1-800-297-6660.

Non-Profit Cooperative Housing

There are over 550 non-profit housing cooperatives across Ontario that offer lower cost housing for people of all ages. For more information visit:

- www.chaseo.org (Eastern Ontario)
- www.cochf.on.ca (Central Ontario)
- www.coophousing.com (Toronto area)

Other affordable options
Life Lease Housing:

Market Value Life Lease projects look like condominium projects, with similar suite sizes, features and monthly fees, however, the owner on title is a not-for-profit or charitable organization. An individual purchases from the non-profit organization the exclusive right to occupy the suite they select and to use the common facilities. When the owner of a suite, or their estate, wish to sell or transfer their lease, they receive the "market value" of their suite, similar to a condominium or detached home. Many Life Lease projects offer their occupants on-site support services for a fee. For more information, contact the Life Lease Associates of Canada.

- Website address: www.life-lease.com
- Telephone: 416-367-2917

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Seniors' Advocacy Organizations

Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities

Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities is a non-profit, volunteer, consumer organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of residents in long-term care facilities.

Concerned Friends is the lead sponsor of the Family Council Project, which aims to develop and strengthen the role of family councils in facilities across the province. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.familycouncils.net
- Telephone: 416-489-0146.

The Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE)

ACE is a legal aid clinic that specializes in the needs of the elderly. The centre offers legal services to low-income seniors, and advocates for changes in laws or policies to protect the rights of the elderly. ACE has various publications and videos – including information about legal rights of senior citizens powers of attorney and housing considerations for seniors.

- Website address: www.advocacycentreelderly.org
- Telephone: 416-598-2656.

Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)

CLEO is a community legal clinic that produces clear language material for people with low incomes. Main topics of their publications include landlord and tenant law, family law, social assistance benefits, women's issues, and powers of attorney.

- Website address: www.cleo.on.ca
- Telephone: 416-408-4420.

Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

The Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to the prevention of elder abuse and neglect.

- Website address: www.onpea.org
- Telephone: 416-978-1716.

Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Organizations that Accredit Providers

Please refer to Chapter 5, pages 40-41 for details on these organizations.

Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA)

- Website address: www.cchsa.ca
- Telephone: 613-738-3800.

Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA)

- Website address: www.orca-homes.com
- Telephone: 905-403-0500.

ISO 9001

- Website address: www.scc.ca (for Canadian affiliate).
- Telephone: 732-671-7130 (U.S.A).

Information-Based Providers

a) Community Information Centres

Inform Ontario – Association of Community Information Centres in Ontario (ACICO)

ACICO is an umbrella organization representing over 40 Community Information Centres (CIC) across Ontario. These agencies specialize in providing up-to-date information and referral services for a range of health and social services funded by all levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal).

- Website address: www.informontario.on.ca
- Telephone: 705-444-0040, ext 226.

Community Information Toronto (CIT)

CIT offers information about a range of health and social services. You can find out more by calling "211" on your telephone (Toronto area only) or visiting the database on their website at:

- Website address: www.211toronto.ca
- Telephone: 211 (Toronto only)

b) Commercial Publications

There are organizations that publish directories or listings of advertisements for various care options (including retirement homes, long-term care facilities, and supportive housing and community support services). These publications vary greatly in terms of distribution, design, frequency of publication, and advertising. The following is a list of a few of the publications available and contact information. **By listing a publication or site, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care does not make any representation or guarantee regarding, nor does it endorse, the site or its contents or further links it may contain.**

The Care Guide

Print and website listings and advertisements of retirement homes, long-term care facilites, community support services, home health care services and hospice care providers. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.thecareguide.com

Comfort Life

A provincial, annual magazine that was launched in October 2002 and provides editorial content, advertisements and listings of retirement homes and long-term care facilities. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.comfortlife.ca

Comprehensive Guide to Retirement Living

This annual book provides editorial content about considering and selecting a retirement home. There is also a listing of the 140 retirement homes in the Greater Toronto Area. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.retirementgta.com

Help's Here

A local directory for the Greater Toronto Area, which covers a range of providers from home care to retirement homes – updated every six months. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.helpshere.com

Solutions Magazine

A magazine published every two months offering editorial content and advertisements on a range of health topics including home health. For more information visit:

- Website address: www.solutions-online.ca

Home and Community Services Checklist

Here are some questions to consider as you gather information about home and community service providers.
Photocopy the following checklists so you can compare service providers.

GENERAL INFORMATION: HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

	Provider
Name of Provider	
Address	
Number of clients	
Length of waiting period	
Contact person	

Notes

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

	Provider
Service features What is the exact service that will be provided?	
What are the hours of operation (e.g., during the day only, or during the night)?	
What are the *days* of operation (e.g., some meal services are only provided during weekdays and not on weekends)?	
What are the limitations of the service (e.g., what is *not* provided)?	
Administrative arrangements What is required to get started? What is the application process?	
Who is your contact person to discuss the services you are going to receive?	
Can you get a contract in writing that outlines the expectations of both parties (client and provider which describes the terms for services) including how they will be provided, and if applicable, the cost?	
Service delivery What types of staff or volunteers provide the service? Are they specially trained?	
If the services are on a visiting basis, will the same person come regularly? If not, how do you know who will be coming?	

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

	Provider
Who will supervise the staff or volunteer(s) providing the care?	
Safety Does the provider have liability insurance to cover incidents or accidents? Are there other precautions the provider has taken to ensure the security of both you and the staff coming to your home?	
Costs What is the cost? How are the costs calculated? Am I expected to pay a fee for this service?	
Am I eligible for any costs to be covered by the provincial or federal government (e.g., veterans benefits)?	
Do I have any private insurance plan(s) that might pay for some of the costs?	
Am I eligible for fee subsidies? How will I be billed?	
Am I eligible for fee subsidies? How will I be billed?	
Quality information Has the provider been accredited by an external organization, such as the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation?	
Is the provider a member of a provincial association (e.g., OCSA or OHHCPA)?	
Contact information Who is the main contact for general information?	

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

	Provider
Who is the contact person if you want to change the arrangements?	
Who is the contact if you have a problem or complaint? Is there a clear process to follow if you have to contact the administrator?	

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Chapter 6: Resources and Checklists

Residential Care Checklist

This checklist has primarily been designed for selecting a long-term care facility. However, you may wish to use and adapt it to consider the offerings of a retirement home or a supportive housing project.

For more detailed information and a checklist for planning a move to a long-term care facility, ask your CCAC for a copy of the handbook called **"Accessing a Long-Term Care Facility."**

For more information on selecting a retirement home, you can also download a list of questions from the Ontario Residential Care Associations' website at www.orca-homes.com

Tips for touring a residential setting

Every residence has a unique culture and surroundings. It is important to determine whether the environment is right for you or your family member. You can determine this fit in the following ways:

- Talk to the residents and their families about their likes and dislikes.
- Ask to see more than just your room and common areas.
- Ask for copies of sample menus, activity calendars and newsletters.
- Ask if you are able to sample a meal or participate in an activity at the facility.
- Look for bulletin boards that might have notes or reports from resident groups, the board of directors, administrator, or documentation from an accrediting organization. (See Tables 1 and 2 on page 40 and 41)

GENERAL INFORMATION: RESIDENTIAL CARE

	Provider
Name of Provider	
Address	
Number of clients	
Length of waiting period	
Contact person	

Notes

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: RESIDENTIAL CARE

	Provider
Location Is the location appealing to you? Is it near stores, a park, a familiar neighbourhood, or in a rural area? Is the location easily accessible for visits by family or friends?	
Appearance Does the building appear to be clean, inviting and well-maintained?	
Room Features Is the type of room and the bathroom to your liking?	
Is there a way to have privacy if the room is shared?	
Can you hook up a phone or cable TV in the room?	
Is there an option for keeping your personal belongings secure (e.g., lockable drawers)?	
Furnishings Are all furnishings provided by the residence or can you bring some of your own?	
Common areas Are there special areas/rooms where you can visit privately?	
Atmosphere Do the staff seem friendly? Are staff warm and concerned when interacting with residents?	
Family involvement How are families involved in the planning for the resident's care?	

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: RESIDENTIAL CARE

	Provider
Is there flexibility around visiting hours?	
Can family or visitors dine with you?	
Meals Are the menus varied and appealing to you?	
Is there flexibility about mealtimes (choices of food, location, time)?	
Can residents bring in their own food?	
Are meals that are culturally familiar to you available?	
Lifestyles What are the policies around smoking, non-smoking (e.g., allowed or not, and if allowed, in what rooms or with what supervision)? What are the policies around having alcoholic beverages?	
Is the provider able/willing to meet your religious, cultural, language, and dietary needs?	
Special needs What special needs can be accommodated at this setting (e.g., oxygen, scooters, specialized services for dementia)?	
Quality of Care Is the organization accredited by an independent body such as CCHSA (see Tables 1 and 2 on page 40-41)?	

SPECIFIC INFORMATION: RESIDENTIAL CARE

	Provider
Costs What are the charges? Are these charges standardized (e.g., long-term care facilities)? What are extra charges, if any, for services or amenities (e.g., phone, hairdressing, transportation)?	
How is billing arranged?	
Frequency of health services How frequently are services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and foot care available?	
Medical care Is your family doctor able to continue providing care, and if not, what does the facility suggest?	
Discharge policies/service limitations Are there situations when this particular setting would no longer be able to offer care to someone?	

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- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
- Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors
- Ontario Community Support Association
- Ontario Home Health Care Providers Association
- Ontario Long-Term Care Association
- Ontario Residential Care Association

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The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has made every effort at the time of writing to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this Guide. **However, the information contained in this Guide is only a guideline and is subject to change without notice. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions or use of the information in this Guide.**

Notes

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